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Technical assistance

Provision of technical assistance to States in the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto

Report of the Secretariat

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 6/1, entitled "Ensuring effective implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto", the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime requested the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to continue providing technical assistance in order to support and complement national, regional and thematic programmes and activities based on the needs and priorities of Member States in combating transnational organized crime. Furthermore, the Conference encouraged UNODC to make use of the technical assistance tools that have been developed, such as handbooks, digests and legal tools, and continue developing new tools, as appropriate, with a view to improving the capacity of States to implement the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto. Finally, the Conference requested UNODC to promote and disseminate such tools and to continue facilitating the exchange of experiences and good practices among practitioners, including through the Sharing Electronic Resources and Laws against Organized Crime (SHERLOC) knowledge management portal and an online digest newsletter.

2. Furthermore, in its resolution 6/4, entitled "Implementation of the provisions on technical assistance of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime", the Conference noted that technical assistance was a fundamental part of the work carried out by UNODC to assist Member States in the effective implementation of the Organized Crime Convention and the Protocols

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thereto and welcomed the work of the Working Group of Government Experts on Technical Assistance.

3. The present report provides updated information on the status of technical assistance activities for the implementation of the Organized Crime Convention and the Protocols thereto provided by UNODC to Member States since the sixth session of the Conference, held in Vienna from 15 to 19 October 2012.

II. Strategic approach of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to delivering technical assistance pursuant to the Convention and the Protocols thereto

4. UNODC continued to pursue a strategic approach to the technical assistance it provides to Member States through its thematic and regional programmes, in order to counter organized crime and trafficking. UNODC is guided by the strategic framework for the period 2014-2015 and its medium-term strategy for the period 2012-2015, which aim to promote an integrated programme approach at the national, regional, interregional and global levels. Under the strategic framework, the thematic programme on transnational organized crime is being further enhanced to reflect the policy guidance for and the global framework of UNODC, including mandates, guiding principles, methodologies and tools. Within the overarching framework of the thematic programme, UNODC global programmes of direct relevance to the delivery of technical assistance in the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols include the following: the Global Programme for Strengthening the Capacities of Member States to Prevent and Combat Organized and Serious Crime; the Global Programme against Money-Laundering, Proceeds of Crime and the Financing of Terrorism; the Container Control Programme; the Global Programme against Cybercrime; the Global Programme for Combating Wildlife and Forest Crime; the Global Programme against Trafficking in Persons; the Global Programme against the Smuggling of Migrants; and the Global Programme on Firearms. A programme to combat falsified medicines posing threats to public health is currently being developed.

5. At the regional and national levels, UNODC continued to assist Member States, upon request, in improving their institutional and operational capacities, commonly as part of the regional programmes. At the regional level, UNODC continued to promote cross-border cooperation and joint initiatives among partner countries through regional cooperation platforms and mechanisms. To date, the Office has launched 10 integrated regional programmes in the following regions: East Africa, Arab States, West Africa, Southern Africa, South-Eastern Europe, Afghanistan and neighbouring countries, South Asia, East Asia and the Pacific, Central America, and the Caribbean. While each programme reflects the specific needs and priorities of the region, as agreed with the respective regional entities and partner States, the fight against organized crime and illicit trafficking constitutes a key component of all programmes.

III. Expanding the knowledge base on organized crime

6. The Organized Crime Convention is approaching universal adherence, but a number of States have yet to ratify or accede to the Convention, and implementation remains an issue in many States parties. In order to continue to improve the ability of States parties to harmonize their domestic legal frameworks with the provisions of the Organized Crime Convention, UNODC has endeavoured to expand its knowledge base on complex issues in combating organized crime.

7. A series of papers have been developed on selected provisions of the Convention for the eighth meeting of the Working Group of Government Experts on Technical Assistance.[1] In addition, with a view to supporting the periodic national processes of carrying out needs assessments and the planning and delivery of technical assistance, UNODC finalized a series of needs assessment tools on the Organized Crime Convention (contained in CTOC/COP/WG.2/2014/CRP.1-4). The tools consist of sets of standardized indicators and questions designed to enable experts from international organizations, non-governmental organizations, national governments and relevant institutions, and, in particular, policymakers and legislators to conduct assessments of selected aspects of implementation of the Organized Crime Convention. The assessment includes identifying gaps in the existing national frameworks for combating organized crime, in order to facilitate the formulation and development of technical assistance projects that adequately respond to identified needs, and also seeks to facilitate the development of performance indicators for evaluating progress in implementation.

8. In order to facilitate the exchange of information on the domestic implementation efforts of Member States, UNODC developed the SHERLOC knowledge management portal.[2] The SHERLOC portal includes a case law database containing jurisprudence and records of successful law enforcement operations on cases of corruption, counterfeiting, falsified medicine, cybercrime, drug offences, money-laundering, obstruction of justice, participation in an organized criminal group, piracy, smuggling of migrants, trafficking in firearms, trafficking in cultural property, wildlife and forest crime, trafficking in persons and other serious crimes. That information allows users to see the ways in which Member States are addressing organized crime cases, both operationally and judicially.

9. SHERLOC also hosts an electronic repository of laws relevant to the provisions of the Organized Crime Convention, which is searchable by country, article, crime types and cross-cutting issues. While also enabling access to documents containing legislation in full, the database also provides extracts of laws, relevant to specific articles and crime types, allowing the user to rapidly locate provisions relating to the search query. The UNODC directory of competent national authorities is currently being redeveloped and will be fully integrated into SHERLOC. UNODC is further expanding SHERLOC to include a bibliographic database and policy documents.

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[1] More information on the Working Group of Government Experts on Technical Assistance is available at www.unodc.org/unodc/en/treaties/CTOC/working-groups.html.

[2] The SHERLOC knowledge management portal is available at sherloc.unodc.org. States are encouraged to submit legislation and case law, as well as policy documents on combating organized crime to the Secretariat by e-mail (sherloc@unodc.org).

10. During the reporting period, UNODC also delivered legislative assistance in the 45 States members of the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime, as well as in Cambodia, Indonesia, the United Republic of Tanzania and Viet Nam, on a wide range of provisions including the criminalization of participation in an organized criminal group, money-laundering, the obstruction of justice, the liability of legal persons, jurisdiction, confiscation, witness protection, special investigative techniques, joint investigative teams and prosecution. Pre-ratification assistance was also provided to Somalia. The UNODC *Model Legislative Provisions against Organized Crime* were utilized in the provision of legislative assistance and were adapted to the needs of States, depending on their legal tradition and social, economic, cultural and geographic conditions. The *Model Legislative Provisions* are now available in the six official languages of the United Nations.

IV. Strengthening international judicial cooperation to fight transnational organized crime

11. During the reporting period, UNODC continued to provide support to strengthen international and regional cooperation to prevent and combat transnational organized crime. UNODC has acted as the secretariat and the facilitator of the Network of Prosecutors against Organized Crime in Central America, an initiative under the umbrella of the Central American Council of Public Prosecutors. In May 2013, UNODC also led the establishment of additional regional networks in West Africa, through the Network of West African Central Authorities and Prosecutors and in Central and West Asia, in May 2014. An agreement to establish a regional network in East Africa was reached in June 2014. Experts from the Gulf region have also agreed to establish a network of central authorities and prosecutors, for which terms of reference are being developed. Moreover, consultations have been held between UNODC and Member States with a view to considering the best way to promote regional cooperation in the Middle East and North Africa. UNODC also delivered regional and national training workshops, promoting best practices in international cooperation in criminal matters and knowledge in related substantive areas. Furthermore, UNODC embarked on a process of upgrading existing online tools, such as the Mutual Legal Assistance Request Writer Tool, in addition to the directory of competent national authorities.[3]

V. Strengthening criminal justice responses to laundering proceeds of crime

12. During the reporting period, UNODC provided assistance to Member States to address the links between money-laundering and serious organized crime. The Office has mentors placed in various subregions: in Southern Africa, to strengthen asset confiscation procedures; in South-East Asia, to build effective procedures to counter money-laundering and the financing of terrorism; and in West Africa, to establish comprehensive regimes to counter money-laundering and the financing of

[3] For more information on UNODC activities to promote the implementation of the provisions of the Organized Crime Convention on international cooperation, see CTOC/COP/2014/10.

terrorism, with a focus on the development and enhancement of financial intelligence units.

13. National financial investigation training courses were delivered in Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire and Mauritania, focusing on investigation skills and fostering close working relationships between police and prosecutors. In 2012 and 2013, UNODC also conducted a series of courses for financial intelligence unit analysts in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Jordan, Mali, Mauritania, the Niger, Pakistan, the Philippines and the State of Palestine with the purpose of developing knowledge and skills in order to detect suspicious transactions related to money-laundering and the financing of terrorism. In addition, a training course using mock trials was conducted in Senegal.

14. UNODC continued to deliver a training course to customs services and other border control agencies to prevent cash from being smuggled across borders. The course covered new procedures in that area and expanded on existing practice to teach practitioners to identify cash couriers, interdict and investigate illicit cash movements and seize funds. Through its Global Programme against Money-Laundering, Proceeds of Crime and the Financing of Terrorism, UNODC delivered training to officials from Afghanistan, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Pakistan, the Philippines, Senegal, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Viet Nam. A regional training session for nine Caribbean countries was also conducted in Antigua and Barbuda in 2013.

15. To further the international effort to investigate piracy crimes, UNODC assisted national financial intelligence units in following the financial flows stemming from piracy. In cooperation with the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia, UNODC continued to build capacity to counter money-laundering and to raise awareness on issues related to the financing of terrorism. UNODC also organized an expert group meeting on money value transfer services in Somalia in March 2013. The purpose of the meeting was to promote anti-money-laundering measures for money value transfer services and foster cooperation between that service community and Somali authorities to prevent organized criminal groups from misusing those services. UNODC continues to play a central role in information-sharing and facilitating contacts for the Contact Group.

16. In 2012 and 2013, over 50 countries received tailor-made advisory services and other technical input relevant to the implementation of international standards to combat money-laundering and the financing of terrorism, as well as for the enhancement of legislation on asset forfeiture. Those countries included Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cayman Islands, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mali, Malawi, Myanmar, Namibia, the Niger, Pakistan, Senegal, Somalia, Swaziland, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, the United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam and Yemen.

VI. Improving law enforcement cooperation and inter-institutional coordination

17. In the reporting period, UNODC continued to promote regional law enforcement cooperation through, inter alia, the establishment of and support to regional centres, such as the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre, the joint planning cell of Afghanistan, Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Pakistan, and the Gulf Criminal Information Centre to Combat Drugs of the Gulf Cooperation Council. The centres provide platforms for sharing criminal intelligence and coordination of multilateral operations.[4]

18. In order to strengthen interregional cooperation, UNODC promoted cooperation among the centres as well as with international and regional organizations, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Chiefs of Police (ASEANAPOL), the Asia-Pacific Information and Coordination Centre for Combating Drug Crimes, the European Police Office, the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL); the Southeast European Law Enforcement Centre and the World Customs Organization. This initiative, known as the "networking the networks" initiative, aims at building and strengthening cooperation between participating entities in order to enhance effectiveness in the fight against organized crime.

19. Through the global Container Control Programme, UNODC and the World Customs Organization continue to assist in building the capacity of law enforcement agencies to identify and inspect shipping containers that may be used for illicit purposes, such as illicit trafficking in drugs, weapons, explosives and timber, among other things. The Programme's activities are carried out through detailed assessments of container ports and the promotion of cooperation among law enforcement agencies through the creation of inter-agency port control units, which have been given extensive training on risk management and profiling.

20. The Container Control Programme currently operates in seaports in 15 countries in West Africa, Latin America and West and Central Asia. The selected sites are located in major drug-producing regions and/or along established sea and land trade routes used for the illicit trans-shipment of drugs and other illicit commodities. In 2013, under the global Container Control Programme, 23,444 kilograms (kg) of cocaine, 6,422 kg of cannabis, 1,277 kg of heroin, 60,883 kg of tramadol and 725 kg of ivory were seized. In addition, large quantities of counterfeit goods (119 containers), medicines, cigarettes, spirits, stolen cars and e-waste were also seized in 2013. Those results demonstrate the effectiveness of the Programme in bringing together the various front-line enforcement agencies and in promoting and increasing the professionalism of officers. They also demonstrate the ongoing utilization of the intelligence systems that facilitate the exchange of operational information, which are available through the Programme. UNODC plans to expand its assistance in container control to 34 additional countries worldwide.

21. In expanding its counter-piracy programme to make it a maritime crime programme, UNODC continued to provide support to States in the Indian Ocean

[4] UNODC has received requests from South Asia, West Africa and other regions to assist in building regional law enforcement cooperation structures and platforms.

region for piracy-related prosecutions. Assistance was provided to police, courts, prosecutors and prisons to ensure that trials of Somali suspects are effective, efficient and fair. With the support of UNDOC, a 500-bed prison was set up in April 2014, which will ensure that convicted pirates are transferred back to Somalia to serve their sentence under conditions meeting international standards. The expansion of the programme further includes capacity-building of Somali maritime police, in order to enable authorities to control and patrol their own coast. Moreover, support and assistance have been provided to a Somali-driven mechanism to implement the Somali Maritime Resources and Security Strategy, including by reviewing, drafting and advising on maritime legislation. A hostage support programme has ensured humanitarian support for piracy hostages. In addition, programming and technical assistance have been provided to countries in the Gulf of Guinea in response to the escalating threat of piracy and armed robbery in that region.

VII. Protection of witnesses and victims of organized crime

22. The cooperation of witnesses in providing testimonial evidence is crucial to the investigation of serious and organized crime cases and for enabling prosecutions. Support to States in building effective and efficient criminal justice processes, including assistance and protection mechanisms for victims and witnesses, is a necessary part of combating transnational organized crime. UNODC provides support for the development and implementation of witness protection laws, measures and special programmes, in order to ensure the protection of at-risk witnesses and victims.

23. During the reporting period, UNODC continued to support the development of the Witness Protection Agency in Kenya through the placement of a mentor attached to the Office of the Attorney General. Through the mentor, technical guidance and advice were provided on strategic and operational issues for the Agency itself, as well as for prosecutors and police officials. Training was provided to more than 600 criminal justice officials in Ethiopia, Kenya, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania.

VIII. Technical assistance in combating trafficking in persons

24. UNODC continued to promote the ratification and implementation of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.[5] With regard to its normative work to that end, UNODC continued to contribute to the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, held in May 2013, and the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, held in October 2013.

[5] For more information on UNODC activities to promote and support the implementation of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol, including technical assistance, see document CTOC/COP/2014/3.

25. UNODC also undertook to explore key concepts of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol in close consultation with Member States. Although the Protocol's definition of trafficking in persons is widely embraced by States and the international community, it has become evident over the past decade that questions remain about certain aspects of that definition. This implies that there is a risk that important concepts contained in the Protocol may not be clearly understood and may therefore not be consistently implemented and applied. At the sixth session of the Conference, the first issue paper, on the concept of abuse of a position of vulnerability, was launched. In the reporting period, UNODC initiated the development of a second issue paper, on the issue of consent; an expert group meeting on consent took place in February 2014 and the issue paper will be finalized in 2014. A third issue paper will explore the concept of exploitation.

26. UNODC continued to develop and expand its case law database on trafficking in persons, which is part of the SHERLOC knowledge management portal. The database currently includes more than 1,000 cases from 83 countries. Based on an analysis of cases contained in the database, UNODC has started to develop a case digest on evidential and victim protection issues, for which an expert group meeting was held in May 2014.

27. UNODC continued to implement and further develop its global training initiative to combat trafficking in persons and, in 2013 and 2014, over 60 countries in all regions received legislative assistance and specialized training for criminal justice practitioners. In December 2013, UNODC also organized an expert group meeting on trafficking in persons for the purpose of organ removal.

28. As mandated by the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, in December 2012, UNODC published the *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*, which provides an overview of patterns and flows of trafficking in persons at the global, regional and national levels. UNODC is currently preparing the second edition of the *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*, to be published in December 2014.

29. UNODC continued to be the agency entrusted with coordinating the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons. The Group, currently chaired by the International Organization for Migration, has held several meetings and continued its work to improve cooperation and coordination between United Nations entities and other international organizations in order to achieve a holistic approach to preventing and combating trafficking in persons.

IX. Technical assistance to enhance the response to the smuggling of migrants

30. UNODC actively promoted the ratification and implementation of the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.[6] UNODC developed and disseminated various technical assistance tools and publications to assist

[6] More information on UNODC activities to promote and support the implementation of the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol, including technical assistance in this regard, is contained in document CTOC/COP/2014/4.

countries in their work against smuggling of migrants. An issue paper on smuggling of migrants and corruption was launched to assist policymakers and practitioners in preventing and addressing corruption related to migrant smuggling operations. In addition, the *Assessment Guide to the Criminal Justice Response to the Smuggling of Migrants* was published, providing an inventory of measures for assessing the legislative, investigative, prosecutorial, judicial and administrative responses to the smuggling of migrants by land, sea and air.

31. In July 2013, UNODC launched the Voluntary Reporting System on Migrant Smuggling and Related Conduct in South-East Asia, to support the Bali Process. The system enhances the collection and analysis of data on the smuggling of migrants.

32. UNODC has also provided legal advice and assistance to legislative drafters, judges and prosecutors, through the analysis of gaps in legislation in several regions.

X. Trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition

33. During the reporting period, UNODC continued to implement the Global Programme on Firearms with the aim of raising awareness, promoting adherence to and supporting the implementation of the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, by providing technical and legislative assistance to Member States.[7] UNODC made numerous presentations at conferences, meetings and side events on the relevance of the Firearms Protocol in combating illicit trafficking in and manufacturing of firearms. A ratification kit to explain and facilitate the process of ratifying the Firearms Protocol was also published. During the reporting period, the number of States parties increased by 18, with 109 States now parties to the Firearms Protocol.

34. The UNODC *Model Law against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition* was translated into the six official languages of the United Nations. In 2013, a number of enhancements and updates were introduced in the Model Law, following the positive feedback received from selected legal experts, practitioners and professors from different countries and legal systems.

35. UNODC also developed standard operational procedures for the delivery of legislative assistance to countries wishing to harmonize their legislation with the Firearms Protocol and other relevant international or regional instruments. Further, UNODC supported the establishment of drafting committees with the mandate to review, comment and validate the recommendations of the legislative assessments.

[7] More information on UNODC activities to promote and support the implementation of the Firearms Protocol, including technical assistance in this regard, is contained in document CTOC/COP/2014/5.

36. UNODC also supported and promoted regional harmonization efforts, by developing a regional legislative comparative analysis and organizing two regional meetings in 2012, in Senegal and Argentina, in cooperation with the Economic Community of West African States and the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR). A third meeting was held in Senegal in February 2014 for countries from the Sahel region and West Africa.

37. In order to facilitate the implementation of the Firearms Protocol, UNODC initiated the development of a comprehensive firearms training curriculum in modular form, with support from relevant regional experts. Moreover, in 2013, UNODC developed a training course on investigation and prosecution of firearms trafficking and an outline for a training course for firearms transfer control authorities.

38. UNODC delivered training courses on investigation and prosecution of firearms trafficking to more than 90 criminal justice practitioners in Ghana and Senegal in 2013 and in the Plurinational State of Bolivia in 2014, in cooperation with the national commissions for the control of small arms and light weapons, as well as with the participation of civil society organizations as observers, and in cooperation with relevant partners, including INTERPOL.

39. The global study on firearms, prepared pursuant to Conference resolution 5/4, is aimed at increasing the understanding of the problem of firearms trafficking, revealing existing routes in the illicit trade of firearms and identifying new or emerging global trends. By focusing on the identification of the main trafficking flows across regions, the study seeks to enhance understanding of the interconnectedness and transnational nature of the illicit trafficking in firearms.

XI. Emerging crimes

40. Wildlife and forest crime is a form of transnational organized crime. UNODC has developed the Global Programme for Combating Wildlife and Forest Crime, which aims to provide technical assistance. The *Wildlife and Forest Crime Analytic Toolkit*, a technical resource to assist requesting Governments in analysing their responses to this threat, was utilized for assessments in Bangladesh, Gabon, Nepal and Peru. Technical assessments to strengthen legislation and law enforcement capacities have also been undertaken in East Africa. On the basis of the results of those assessments and analyses, UNODC developed workplans that include the promotion of inter-agency cooperation to counter such trafficking, as well as training on wildlife crime investigative techniques and illegal timber trade. In addition, in cooperation with its international partners, UNODC is developing guidelines for methods and procedures for the forensic identification of illicitly trafficked ivory and timber.

41. UNODC organized a regional workshop, hosted by the Government of Botswana, on recovering the proceeds of wildlife and timber crimes in Asia and Africa. Bringing together international experts, prosecutors, investigators, financial investigation units and relevant agencies, the workshop aimed to raise awareness of the importance of using financial investigation and anti-money-laundering techniques to tackle organized crime involved in wildlife and forest crime.

42. UNODC has commenced the development of model legislative provisions to combat falsified medicines posing threats to public health, in line with the Organized Crime Convention. The model legislative provisions will be accompanied by a commentary and include various drafting options, which will be applicable to all legal systems and adaptable to the needs of each State. The model legislative provisions will be utilized by UNODC as technical assistance tools to provide advisory services and assistance to countries to facilitate the review, revision or drafting of new legislation to combat falsified medicines.

XII. Conclusions

43. UNODC continues to pursue a strategic approach to the delivery of technical assistance through its thematic and regional programmes, with the aim of promoting an integrated programme approach at the national, regional, interregional and global levels. The thematic programme on transnational organized crime is being further developed to reflect the policy guidance and global framework of UNODC and to consistently develop technical assistance initiatives through global programmes of direct relevance to the implementation of the Convention and the Protocols thereto.

44. During the reporting period, expanding the knowledge base of UNODC and the management of that knowledge base was a core element of the Office's work to support States in their efforts to implement the Organized Crime Convention and the Protocols thereto. Through the expanded knowledge base, legislative assistance was delivered to harmonize national legislation so that it complied with the Organized Crime Convention, including provisions on emerging crimes, and the Protocols thereto.

45. UNODC continued to deliver a broad range of technical assistance over a wide thematic portfolio. UNODC has focused its law enforcement assistance on the establishment of regional centres for sharing criminal intelligence and coordination of multilateral operations, as well as the networking of such networks. Through the "networking the networks" initiative, cooperative links between those entities can be established and strengthened.

46. Although universal adherence to the Organized Crime Convention is a goal within reach, current information regarding domestic implementation is insufficient, which may have a detrimental impact on the design and efficient delivery of technical assistance programmes and projects.